



The National Child Care Information Center: Celebrating 10 Years of Service

"I can say with absolute certainty that we would not have made the progress we did advancing the President's Good Start, Grow Smart early learning initiative without the training and tools developed and delivered across the nation by NCCIC to States, Tribes, and Territories." —Shannon Christian, Associate Commissioner of the Child Care Bureau

The National Child Care Information Center (NCCIC), first funded in 1994 by the Child Care Bureau, Administration for Children and Families (ACF), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, is a national clearinghouse and technical assistance center. Its mission is to link parents, providers, policy-makers, researchers, and the public to early care and education information.

Launching NCCIC

From its beginning in October 1994—a time when the Child Care Bureau at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services also was being formed—NCCIC had a strong vision and a strategic focus. Joan Lombardi, the primary visionary for NCCIC, wanted to use technology to increase support for child care in States with a special emphasis on those individuals who make and influence policies. A new clearinghouse had to be created to meet these goals. Over the past 10 years, NCCIC has implemented this vision by linking parents, providers, policy-makers, researchers, and the public to early care and education information resources and by providing technical assistance to States as they build and support their early care and education systems.

"Those early years were critical. It was an exciting time, a hopeful time, a time where we had to think out of the box."

—Joan Lombardi, first Associate Commissioner of the Child Care Bureau

Providing Quality Information Services

Information services have been a backbone of NCCIC since it started, allowing NCCIC to meet the informational needs of the early care and education community. NCCIC's staff includes Information Specialists—content experts—who provide question and answer services to our users on a full range of topics such as: literacy, licensing regulations, professional development, financing, subsidy administration, early education partnerships, and current research and promising practices. Over the past ten years, NCCIC has answered over 60,000 information requests via e-mail, meetings and conferences, fax, phone, and mail.

"We wanted people to use information to make a difference in children's lives."

—Anne Goldstein, former Executive Director of NCCIC, 1994–2000

Expanding Services with Technology

By partnering with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Elementary and Early Childhood Education (ERIC/EECE) at the University of Illinois—Urbana/Champaign (now the

“NCCIC made excellent use of the Internet before it was the fashion to do so.”

—Dianne Rothenberg,
former Co-Director
of ERIC/EECE

Early Childhood and Parenting Collaborative), NCCIC was fortunate enough to have access to the latest Web technology just as the Internet was becoming widely used. NCCIC.org—a newly redesigned Web site as of May 2004—has grown to an average of 4,000 visitors per day and has become the primary vehicle for providing policy-makers and parents with critical information about child care. It is a comprehensive site that offers State-specific information and data summaries; links to specialized organizations, and thousands of documents and resources that providers,

parents, and State, local, and Tribal Government Administrators will find useful; and contact information for different State agencies involved in child care. NCCIC's Web site also hosts the [NCCIC Online Library](#), which offers the largest collection of free summaries and links to full-text publications about child care and early childhood education.

Reaching the Field through Technical Assistance

In 1998, NCCIC based State Technical Assistance Specialists in the 10 ACF Regions across the country. These specialists—many of whom were former State Administrators and policy-makers before coming to NCCIC—coordinate with ACF Regional Offices and provide technical support to the State Child Care Administrators and other key policy-makers in the State. This support includes gathering information, providing consultation, developing materials, conducting training, planning conferences, and making referrals to NCCIC Information Specialists.

“NCCIC State Technical Assistance Specialists have set the standard for technical assistance services and have put us closer to States than ever before.”

—Lillian Sugarman,
former Director of Technical
Assistance, 1996–1999

Moving Forward

In the last decade, the child care world has grown large and complex, and NCCIC has continued to expand its knowledge-base in order to meet the information and technical assistance needs of its users. With a staff that has grown from two full-

“What makes NCCIC unique is its focus across early care and education systems and its steadfast belief that ‘content is king.’ ”

—Janet Mascia,
Executive Director of NCCIC, 2001–present

time members to almost 30, NCCIC has assisted State and Federal Administrators in focusing on important system changes in order to provide quality child care services to more children. In recent months this work has included helping States revamp parts of

their professional development systems, implement tiered quality strategies, learn from other States about cost containment approaches to subsidy management, and at the direction of the Child Care Bureau, plan for implementing President Bush's *Good Start, Grow Smart* early learning initiative.

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